






**Baltimore County, Maryland
Environmental Protection & Sustainability (EPS)**

Forest Conservation

The State mandated Forest Conservation law requires developments with forest onsite to retain a certain percentage of forest, either onsite or elsewhere. If there is no forest onsite, there is a requirement to plant forest. A "Forest Conservation Easement" must be established to ensure long term protection of forest. The forests on your land contribute to overall countywide benefits and, as such, are protected for your benefit and for the long-term benefits provided to the larger community and the Chesapeake Bay. Forests provide a variety of benefits, such as:

-  Increase your property value. Studies show that wooded areas add value to a property. This is even higher when the forest is adjacent to larger protected woodlands.
-  Provide privacy and screening from other properties.
-  Reduce your heating and cooling bills by shading your home and/or blocking the wind.
-  Provide more livable communities.
-  Provide habitat for wildlife.

May I cut trees or clear forest on my property?

Trees within a Forest Conservation Easement may not be cut or removed without written permission from this EPS. If a tree is dead or dying, a threat to your home, and is located in an Easement, contact EPS to schedule an inspector for an assessment. If more than 20,000 square feet of forest is proposed to be cleared, please contact this office to see if Forest Conservation regulations apply. Timber harvests may be permitted in accordance with an approved Forest Management Plan.

What is a Declaration of Intent and when is one used?

A Declaration of Intent (DOI) is a contract between a property owner and the County for a period of 5-years in which the owner will not impact a fixed amount of forest or will continue an agricultural or forest harvest operation. Failure to abide by the exemption requires full application of the Forest Conservation Regulations for the activity.

How does a Forest Conservation Easement on my property affect my use of the land?

The Forest Conservation Easement is designated as a non-disturbance area. Disturbance includes, but is not limited to, mowing, dumping, storage of materials or firewood, placement of play equipment, sheds or other structures, grading, filling, or cutting of vegetation. Other prohibited practices include the storage or operation of motorized vehicles of any kind, the housing or grazing of animals, and the use, storage, or application of pesticides. No disturbance may occur within the Easement without written permission from EPS.

How can I determine if a Forest Conservation Easement is on my property?

The record plat for the property will show easements. The Easement will be labeled. A plat may be obtained at the Office of Land Records, Clerk of the Court, located at 401 Bosley Avenue, Towson, Maryland, or Maryland State Archives at www.msa.md.gov and look for the Plats.net link.



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